

## **Elementary School Lesson 3**

### **Civic Duty: Who Can Vote and for Whom Do We Vote?**

#### **Materials**

*\*Indicates material included at the end of the lesson.*

- For the teacher:
  - Concept Webs about citizenship created in previous lesson (if available)
  - *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers* by Karen B. Winnick or *Grace's Letter to Lincoln* by Peter and Connie Roop
  - Large chart paper and chart markers, blackboard, or overhead
- For the students:
  - Pencils, paper
  - Brainwriting Worksheet\* with Amendments 15, 19, 24, 26 of the United States Constitution\* on the back
  - 3-2-1 Activity\*

#### **Vocabulary**

- *Vote*: A usually formal expression of opinion or will in response to a proposed decision; the right of suffrage.
- *Suffrage*: A vote or voting, especially a vote in favor of some candidate or issue; the right to vote, especially in political elections.
- *Candidate*: A person who seeks, or who has been proposed for, an office.

#### **Introductory Questions (Brainwriting)**

Ask students to work in small groups to brainstorm and record their ideas for the questions on the Brainwriting Worksheet.\*

- **Who can legally vote?**
- **For what do we vote?**
- **Why do we vote?**
- **What are some laws for voting?**

Allow groups to share their answers. Make corrections to any misconceptions as you share/discuss—allow students to help in the correction.

#### **Suggested Lesson Procedure**

Read from either *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers* or *Grace's Letter to Lincoln*.

Introduce your chosen story by asking students to particularly focus on ideas about voting. The students will be making a list of the ideas after the story. Read the story.

After reading ask the students to “elbow talk” about any voting idea(s) in the story (full explanation of elbow talk at end of unit). Refer students to the Brainwriting Worksheet\* to help them focus.

On chart paper, blackboard, or overhead, make a list of references to voting from the story.

Ask students the following questions, allowing for “elbow talk” before asking students to share ideas (full explanation of elbow talk at end of unit).

## Why Lincoln Was a Lawyer: Abraham Lincoln, the Law & Civic Education (Elementary)

If you have read *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers*, you might ask the following questions:

- **Why did the boy say that his sister cannot vote?** *Accept reasonable answers.*
- **Was he correct? Why?** *Emphasize that gender may have had as much to do with his statement as age.*
- **Should there be limitations on who can vote? If so, what and why?** *Accept reasonable answers.*
- **Did Lincoln think that voting was important? Why or why not?** *Accept reasonable answers. Ask students to cite text to support their answers.*

If you have read *Grace's Letter to Lincoln*, you might ask the following questions:

- **Why is Grace's mother upset?** *Answers found in Chapter 3. Women don't have the right to vote. It is unfair to women, and if everyone could vote, we could all work on America's problems together. Accept reasonable answers.*
- **Why does Grace decide to write to the President to suggest he grow 'whiskers'?** *Answer in Chapter 5. Grace has been working on banners for rallies with her friends and family members. She has seen his face a lot and has dreamt of meeting the candidate. She decides to write and make her suggestions. Accept reasonable answers.*
- **Should there be limitations on who can vote? If so, what and why?** *Accept reasonable answers.*

Read aloud to the class the voting related Amendments from the United States Constitution on the back of the Brainwriting Worksheet.\* After the introduction of each amendment, students should discuss with an "elbow buddy" their ideas about the meaning of the voting amendment and share their findings with the group (full explanation of elbow talk at end of unit). *Accept reasonable sharing while clarifying any misunderstandings. Specifically, point out to which group of citizens the amendment gives the right to vote. Many students will not understand that all citizenry have not always voted.*

If time allows, discuss the following questions.

- **How do people choose which candidate for whom they vote?**
- **Should a candidate's appearance, age, gender, or race influence the vote? Does it?**
- **Have students give examples of times that these things might have affected the vote.**

### **Exit Activity**

Have students complete the 3-2-1 Activity.\*